



Town of Rowe
Board of Selectmen Minutes
Tuesday, December 8, 2020 –4:00 p.m.
VIA TELECONFERENCE

This meeting will be held via video conference, consistent with Gov. Baker's temporary modifications to Open Meeting Law due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Board of Selectmen: Chair Charles Sokol, Selectman Joanne Semanie
Absent: Selectman Ed Silva
Administrative Staff: Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary, Paul McLatchy III Administrative Assistant
Staff: Board of Health Chair Maggie Rice

Call to Order: Chair Sokol called the meeting to order at 4:05 P.M., a quorum of the board present via remote participation.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: **yes**
Silva: **absent**
Vice-Chair Semanie: **yes**

Background: This group of individuals (self-titled "Covid Group") has been meeting weekly for the past few months to listen to the state Covid-19 briefings and discuss ongoing matters in town related to the pandemic. As Board of Health Clerk Joanne Semanie was elected last Saturday to the Board of Selectmen, there is now a quorum of the board present during these weekly meetings, and as such, must take place in open session.

Covid Discussion: The following points/topics were addressed during discussion:
Maggie Rice, Board of Health Chair reported the following:

- Chair Rice said the common complaint in western Mass is that testing is taking too long and there are efforts being made to rectify the situation
- 2-3 weeks it is hoped that vaccination for COVID-19 can begin
- Week 13 at school and is going well
- The numbers of COVID-19 cases are rising in western Mass so it is important to remain vigilant

The following message was prepared for the Public Notification System:

Good Evening Rowe Residents,

The following is the weekly message regarding the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic. Topics include vaccination availability, and guidelines on how to stay safe between now and when a vaccine becomes available.

It is likely that coronavirus vaccination will begin in Massachusetts before the end of the month. However, as was mentioned in last week's message, vaccination supply will be limited at first. As such, there will be a phased process of vaccination, starting with those most at risk (including front-line health-care workers), and gradually becoming available to the general public. This process -- the time between final approval and general availability -- may take several months. As vaccines become available locally, we will provide that information to you.

Between now and when the preponderance of people are vaccinated, it is more critical than ever that we continue efforts to curb the spread of the virus. As many of you are already aware, there is currently rapid growth in the number of active cases of coronavirus around the country. Much of this spread is the result of travel and gathering over the thanksgiving holiday, as the appearance of symptoms or positive test results can take several days or weeks to present.

This increase in numbers should serve as a reminder that efforts to reduce exposure to others, to remain steadfast in mask-wearing whenever in public, to maintain distance when around others, to minimize time in indoor public spaces, and whenever possible to limit holiday travel all serve to keep ourselves and each other safe.

It is still the case that these winter weeks and months may become some of the most difficult in this pandemic, and as bad as it seems now it will likely get worse, but hope is on the horizon. Remaining steadfast will do a great deal to help make sure we all stay safe and healthy.

The Rowe Coronavirus task force will continue to keep you updated on these and other coronavirus topics on an on-going basis, typically with weekly updates or when prudent.

Thank you, and stay healthy

~Chuck Sokol

Adjournment:

MOTION: Chair Sokol made a motion to adjourn the meeting 4:41 p.m. The motion was seconded by Selectman Semanie.

MOTION: Roll call vote to call to order:

Chair Sokol: **yes**

Silva: **absent**

Vice-Chair Semanie: **yes**

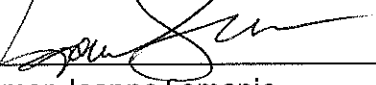
Respectfully Submitted,

Janice Boudreau, Executive Secretary

Approval Date: JANUARY 7, 2021

Approved:



Chuck Sokol, Chair

Selectman Joanne Semanie

Documents:

- Agenda December 8, 2020